



The Deep Trust of a True Shepherd: Part 2

Yahweh's instruction to Abram was clear, as was the remarkable promise...

Genesis 12:1-3

The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you."

Abram chose to trust, and he obeyed God... without question.

One would be hard-pressed not to be challenged by the thought of that level of obedience to such a call. Even if God made the same promise to me that He made to Abram – blessing, fame, protection, and the ability to bless others, as well as a renowned effect on every family on the earth – would I leave my neatly appointed home in a safe corner of the world, my grown children and their children, and set out for an unknown place? Without question? In full obedience?

Or would my response sound more like this...

Where do You want me to go?

When do You want me to leave?

How will I pay for the travel?

Am I supposed to sell the house I live in now or rent it to others? You know, God, just in case everything does not work out like You think, will I have a place to come back to?

What about my grandchildren?

My kids are grown up and on their own, Lord, you know that.
How often will I have the opportunity to see them and their families?

Do You not want me to be involved in their lives,
even as a witness and testimony to You?

If I will be on the road, do I buy a recreational vehicle of
some sort, stay in other people's homes, or in hotels?

Should I use the money in my retirement fund to purchase it
or borrow the cash necessary to implement this plan of Yours
and ensure I have some place to lay my head at night?

If you want me to have a vehicle that I can
sleep in, should it be a new one or a used one?
What size should it be?

Or is this land You are going to show me in another country?
International travel is expensive, Lord. Is that really good
stewardship of the funds You have given to me?

Do I need a post office box somewhere so I can
receive mail? If so, where? If not, how will I receive
the money that I need to pay for everything?

Lord, does this really make sense?

"When it comes to God's calling on our lives, we like to have both clarity and details. We want a detailed description of where to go and what to do when we get there." wrote Jon Haley in Trust, the 31-day devotional he authored for those who attend the church he pastors. "But God seldom works that way. God wants us to exercise faith, not simply our intellect." [Whoa! What? Where's the logic in that?!] "He wants us to learn to walk by faith in Him, rather than simply by sight." [Yeah, but does He know how hard that is for me?!] "Not every call of God involves relocation, but every call does involve leaving some of our past behind and venturing into the unknown with God as our guide." [Really?]

"Yes, Holly, really. That is exactly what God wants you to do – to trust Him with our here and now and our future on this earth... as much as we do with eternity!" Ouch! Where did that come from?

In Abram's "leave and go" moment, he immediately demonstrated deep trust in Yahweh. In mine – and I've had a few – not so much.

As the Father's under-shepherds, we are in fact called to trust Him deeply, beyond what our thoughts on their own will permit, to an unwavering belief in the reliability of God, in His trustworthiness, in the Truth He represents, and in His ability and strength. And we must demonstrate that deep trust through a faith that shows confidence in what we hope for and an assurance about what we do not see.

The man God later renamed Abraham, was known for that type of faith, for deep trust in the Father. He did waiver, but Abraham's faith is the testimony left behind for us and called out specifically by the writer of Hebrews. This is the behavior for which he is commended.

Dear fellow under-shepherd, it is that same deep trust we must be known for among our sheep. Imperfect as we are, knowing we will have moments of stumbling, our deep trust in the Father and our willingness to follow Him at all costs must be legendary. Not in the pride-filled way that word can be utilized, but in the way that is celebrated by the Father.

We are to be an example of trust in God for those we lead. We are to model faith in the Father for those we influence. And it is the level of trust and faith that we demonstrate, in the toughest of moments, that will be written on our epitaph in their hearts.

Choose well.

Digging Deeper Questions

1. Are you willing to leave your current leadership position if the Father calls you to serve in a different role? Without question? In full obedience?
2. Do you model a deep faith and trust in the Father to those who have been entrusted to your care?
3. What in your past is The Good Shepherd asking you to leave behind so you can venture forward?